

Original Article

Understanding the Complex Dynamics of the Iran-Iraq-America Conflict

Shanmukha Basappa Kammar

Assistant Professor, Dept of Political Science, Karnataka State Law University, Hubballi

Manuscript ID:
RIGJAAR-2026-030513ISSN: 2998-4459
Volume 3
Issue 5
Pp.61-66
May 2026Submitted: 09 Apr. 2026
Revised: 18 Apr. 2026
Accepted: 20 May 2026
Published: 31 May 2026Correspondence Address:
Shanmukha Basappa Kammar
Assistant Professor, Dept of
Political Science, Karnataka State
Law University, Hubballi
Email: bkm6445@gmail.com

Quick Response Code:

Web: <https://rlgjaar.com>

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.22719108

DOI Link:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22719108>

Creative Commons

**Abstract**

The relationship among Iran, Iraq, and the United States represents one of the most complex and enduring geopolitical dynamics in the contemporary Middle East. Rather than constituting a single continuous three-way conflict, the relationship has evolved through a series of interconnected events, including the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988), the United States–Iran hostage crisis, the Tanker War, the Iran–Contra affair, the Gulf War of 1990–1991, economic sanctions against Iraq and Iran, the United States-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, and the subsequent expansion of Iranian political and strategic influence in Iraq. These developments have transformed the regional balance of power and have contributed to continuing tensions in the Persian Gulf and wider Middle East. The study examines the historical evolution of the Iran–Iraq–United States geopolitical triangle and analyses the strategic interests, security concerns, ideological differences, economic factors, alliances, and external interventions that have shaped relations among the three countries. Particular attention is given to the role of oil and energy security, the Iranian Revolution, the Iran–Iraq War, American interventionism, regional alliances, proxy politics, and the post-2003 transformation of Iraq. The study adopts a qualitative and analytical methodology based primarily on secondary sources, including books, scholarly articles, government publications, policy reports, and reliable institutional sources.

Keywords: Iran, Iraq, United States, Middle East, Geopolitics, Iran–Iraq War, Oil Politics, Regional Security, Proxy Politics, Strategic Interests

Introduction

The Middle East has been playing a pivotal role in international politics, owing to its strategic location, huge energy reserves, long-standing political turmoil, ideological cleavages and the presence of major international powers. In the broader regional context, the changing dynamics among Iran, Iraq, and the United States have had a major impact on the nature of conflict, cooperation, and competition in the Middle East. Iran–Iraq–U.S. relations cannot simply be seen as a continuous three-cornered battle. Instead, it has emerged as a dynamic geopolitical relationship, whose strategic goals, security concerns and foreign policy orientations have at various moments had points of convergence and divergence among the three states. A turning point of great importance was the Iranian Revolution of 1979, which resulted in a complete change in Iran's political system and its foreign relations. The next Iran–Iraq war (1980–1988) further contributed to the region's turmoil and became a prolonged and devastating war. As the war dragged on, the United States increasingly focused on its own concerns, such as the potential for Iran to gain greater strategic and economic influence in the Persian Gulf and adapted its regional policies accordingly. Iraq's 1990 occupation of Kuwait and the ensuing Gulf War of 1991 led to a further shift in the geopolitical landscape. The economic and political pressures on Iraq were continued by the international sanctions regime imposed on Iraq and the political, economic and strategic confrontations between the USA and Iran. The most significant change, however, came after the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, which toppled Saddam Hussein. The downfall of the Ba'athist regime significantly altered Iraq's political landscape and changed the balance of power in the region. It also offered Iran more opportunities to establish political and security relations in Iraq, and more opportunities to form economic relations with Iraq. As the years passed since 2003, Iraq became a greater battleground between Iranian and U.S. strategic interests.

Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) Public License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work noncommercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

How to cite this article:

Kammar, S. B. (2026). Understanding the Complex Dynamics of the Iran-Iraq-America Conflict. *Royal International Global Journal of Advance and Applied Research*, 3(5), 61–66.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22719108>

Iran beefed up ties with some Iraqi political parties and armed groups, meanwhile, the United States retained significant political and security presence in Iraq. Thus, Iraq was a vital arena for indirect competition, for the formation of alliances and for the use of regional influence. The influence and actions of non-state actors, such as political movements, militias, and armed organisations, also presented a challenge to the classical Middle Eastern geopolitical paradigm, which took a state-centred approach. The growing strength of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) brought another layer to these complicated regional dynamics. The growing influence of ISIS posed a major threat to the security of Iraq and led to various degrees of collaboration between actors whose mutual security and broader interests often clashed. While they had a larger-scale competition, both Iran and the United States have played a role in combating ISIS' threat through various strategies and partnerships. Therefore, the post-2003 period has shown that Iran-Iraq-U.S. relations have not been a straightforward process of confrontation, but rather a mix of competition, cooperation, and changing alliances. The evolution of this geopolitical triangle, then, is a reflection of the power dynamics in the Middle East as a whole. The analysis of these developments offers great insights into the evolving regional power dynamics, the significance of external interferences, the importance of energy security, and the rising of the influence of non-state actors in the current international relations.

Statement of the Problem

Throughout the various eras of modern Middle Eastern history, the relationship between Iran, Iraq and the United States has undergone significant shifts. Before the 1979 Revolution, Iran was a close strategic ally of the U.S., and it subsequently became a key adversary to American regional interests. Iraq's position also changed dramatically from a significant regional counterbalance of Iran while Iran-Iraq War and Iraq became a target of U.S.-led military intervention in 2003. After Saddam's downfall, Iran forged tighter political, economic and security ties with a variety of actors in Iraq. This has profoundly changed the regional power dynamics and established intricate dynamics of rivalry, cooperation, and competition. They also pose questions on the strategy goals of three countries, the role of external involvement, the significance of oil and energy security and the impact of shifting regional alliances. This study's central issue is whether and how historical conflicts, national interests, ideological differences, energy interests, regional power struggle, and foreign intervention have all played a role in the geopolitical relationship between Iran, Iraq, and the United States. The study aims to better grasp how this relationship has evolved and its implications for regional stability and security in the Middle East.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the historical foundations of Iran-Iraq rivalry.
2. To analyse the impact of the 1979 Iranian Revolution on regional and international relations.
3. To examine the causes and consequences of the Iran-Iraq War of 1980-1988.

4. To analyse the strategic interests of the United States in the Persian Gulf and the wider Middle East.
5. To examine the nature and extent of United States involvement during the Iran-Iraq War.

Research Methodology

The study is applied in the qualitative and analytical research approach. It is mostly secondary data oriented, as the subject demands analysis of the historical developments, foreign-policy decisions, international relations, geopolitical strategies and regional security dynamics over a long period of time. The research used is historical, descriptive and analysis methods. Major events are analyzed chronologically to provide an understanding of change in relations between Iran, Iraq, and the United States. The research also uses concepts in International Relations such as Realism, Balance of Power Theory, Regional Security Complex Theory and Proxy Conflict Theory.

Scope of the Study

The geographical emphasis is on Iran, Iraq, the USA and the Persian Gulf, with emphasis on the implications of these for the broader Middle East.

The period covered ranges from the historical dimension of Iran-Iraq rivalry to the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, the 2003 Iraq War, the post-2003 era, and recent events in the region.

Limitations

The research for the study is largely secondary data with minimal primary data research. As events in the Middle East evolve, so do interpretations of the past and one must be prepared to review them from time to time.

Review of Literature

The Iran-Iraq-U.S. relations have been extensively discussed in the realm of international relations, Middle East politics, history, security studies, and political economy. There are several streams of existing scholarship, each addressing the issue from a different angle, such as revolutionary change, interstate conflict, strategic competition, ideological divides, economic interests and foreign intervention. Ervand Abrahamian's research on modern Iran offers much insight into the political and social circumstances that led to the Iranian Revolution of 1979. His analysis provides some insight into the shift of Iran from being a close ally of the United States under the Shah to an Islamic regime which increasingly challenged American political and strategic interests in the region. *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran* by Gary Sick explores the deterioration of the relationship between Iran and the United States in the revolutionary era and the ensuing crisis of hostages. His work is valuable for insights into the impact of the breakup of the previous U.S.-Iran alliance on U.S. foreign-policy thinking and the shift in this U.S. strategy toward the Middle East.

Mark Bowden's *Guests of the Ayatollah* is a comprehensive history of the Iranian hostage crisis and its broader political impact. The study shows that the crisis had a significant impact on public and governmental conceptions of Iran in the U.S., and helped shape long-term distrust between the two nations. There has also been a large body of scholarly

work on the Iran–Iraq War. Pierre Razoux, in *The Iran–Iraq War*, analyzes the war from the military, political, diplomatic and strategic points of view. According to his analysis, the war was not only brought about by ideological or religious differences, but by other factors. Inter-Terrestrial territorial squabbles, national interests, security concerns, nationalistic aspirations and regional influence were also key factors. William R. Polk's articles on Iraq and Middle East affairs offer a more general historical perspective on the political evolution of Iraq and its conflicts with its neighbours and other powers. It is important for placing Iraq's experiences into the larger historical and geopolitical context for the Middle East. *The Longest War: The Iran–Iraq Military Conflict* examines the history of the Iran–Iraq War and its international aspects by Dilip Hiro. His research reveals that the conflict gradually extended its involvement with other powers outside the region and linked with broader regional strategic and security issues in the Persian Gulf. There have been various efforts to analyze the strategic aspect of the U.S. engagement, including that of the scholar Trita Parsi, who specializes in the competition between Iran, Israel, and the United States, focusing on that competition. He highlights the shifting regional alliances, strategic rivalries and the geopolitical competition more generally in the Middle East.

In *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict between Iran and America* Kenneth M. Pollack recaps the past of U.S.–Iran relations and discusses why it is that U.S.–Iran relations remain hostile. His analysis brings into focus the intertwined effect of strategic considerations, ideology, security interests and regional politics on the bilateral ties between them. The shift of Iraq following 2003 is an issue that has been well studied by scholars and policy researchers. Vali Nasr has written about the political and sectarian transformations after the Iraq War and its regional impact. His analysis is especially pertinent to the understanding of the effects of the decline of the Arab political centres on the distribution of power in the Middle East. Research of the post-Saddam Hussein Iraq also shows that the fall of Saddam Hussein brought about a lot of regional changes in politics. Political and arms parties in Iraq with varying degrees of links to Tehran arose and grew, creating additional opportunities for Tehran to build political, economic and security ties in Iraq. Thus, the post-2003 Iraq became a crucial area where Iranian regional power and America's strategy began to converge more and more. The current body of literature offers rich information on the history of Iran–Iraq relations, U.S.–Iran rivalry, the Iran–Iraq war, and Iraq's transformation after 2003. But the majority of the scholarship looks at these connections on an individual basis or on a limited set of historical moments. The present study tries to integrate these dimensions by examining the Iran–Iraq–U.S. relation in the context of an interconnected geopolitical triangle, in which strategic interests, regional power struggle, security issues, external intervention and the fluctuating political landscape of the Middle East play a significant role.

Historical Background: Roots of the Iran – Iraq Conflict

The war between Iran and Iraq started as a result of territorial, political, ideological, and regional rivalries. Disagreements over the Shatt al-Arab waterway and rivalry for influence in the region had a special impact on their relationship. There were also tensions due to the political change in both countries. Iraq was a secular Ba'athist nation while Iran became an Islamic Republic after the 1979 Revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini. The new Iranian government had a revolutionary flavor, and that was worrisome in Baghdad, especially in terms of its sway over the Shia population in Iraq. The Algiers Agreement of 1975 temporarily eased tensions by setting up a new basis for the border between the two nations. The settlement was still fragile, however. In the midst of Iran's post-revolutionary political and military hardships, Iraq made a major attempt to attack Iran in September 1980. The resulting Iran–Iraq war lasted until 1988, during which time many people and livelihoods were lost. The war also engaged the involvement of outside powers, such as the United States, and thus involved the bilateral issue in the larger strategic competition of the Cold War and the Middle East.

The Role of America in the Middle East before the Conflict

The United States had already achieved significant strategic and economic interests in the Middle East before the outbreak of the Iran–Iraq War. In the Cold War era, Washington wanted to keep the Soviets in check and keep good ties with the governments they deemed beneficial for regional stability. The Persian Gulf was especially significant to the policy of the United States for its oil resources and strategic location. When the Iranian Revolution occurred in 1979, U.S. policy was dramatically altered. Iran's alliances with the United States were severed and became America's adversary. Washington's response was to take a firmer stance on the containment of revolutionary Iran as an important foreign policy goal. In the midst of the Iran–Iraq War, the policy of the United States was dominated by the fear of the possibility of regional domination by Iraq or Iran, especially Iran. So, U.S. policy was a functional mix of security, energy, and geopolitical factors. The Iran–Iraq War was sparked by a series of key events. There were a number of key events which led to the Iran–Iraq war. In 1980, the war broke out as a result of a number of developments. The first was the unresolved issue of the Shatt al-Arab waterway whose strategic and economic significance was vital to both countries. The Algiers Agreement of 1975 addressed the boundary problem for the time being, but the situation later came back to the fore. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 was another significant event. The Revolution to the Islamic Republic reversed the balance in the region and created worry in the rank and file of Iraq's Ba'athist government. Saddam Hussein was afraid of the revolutionary ideology among Shia population of Iraq and wanted Iraq to become a major Arab power in the Gulf. Iran's political changes and domestic turmoil were also occasions for Iraq to advance its territorial and strategic goals. Meanwhile, the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, the Cold

War, brought an international flavor to the regional conflict. Such territorial disputes and ideological conflicts, along with domestic politics and regional aspirations, ultimately led to Iraq's invasion of Iran in September 1980, which lasted eight years.

America's Strategic Interests in the Region

Political and strategic significance and energy resources, coupled with regional power rivalries and security issues, have kept the Middle East a central focus of U.S. foreign policy. Ensuring the security of global energy supplies, especially from the Persian Gulf, has long been a U.S. priority. The U.S. has also been trying to defend its regional allies, maintain its strategic presence and contain the spread of competing powers. Iran's regional influence and ties with armed and political actors in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen have caused problems for U.S. policy. Another focal point of concern has been the safety of significant maritime routes, especially the Strait of Hormuz, which has significant portions of global energy supplies. Thus, U.S. presence in the region has been driven by energy security, regional stability, the protection of allies, freedom of navigation, and containment of strategic competitors.

The Impact of the 1979 Iranian Revolution

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 completely altered the political landscape of Iran and its relations with Iraq and the United States. The coming to the power of Ayatollah Khomeini and the overthrow of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi brought a new revolutionary direction in the Korean foreign policy.

The revolution raised serious concerns in Iraq, including those of the government headed by Saddam Hussein. Baghdad was concerned about the spread of Iranian revolutionism into Iraq, where the Shia population, especially, might find themselves swayed by the radical ideology and unsettle the prevailing political system. Such ideological issues, as well as unsettled border disagreements, led to the deterioration of bilateral relations and ultimately to the start of war in 1980. The revolution brought an end to a longstanding strategic partnership between the United States and Iran. Over the years, relations grew worse and worse, especially after the hostage crisis of 1979–1981 in which 52 American citizens were held hostage for 444 days. This crisis was a major symbol of the deterioration of the U.S.–Iran ties and played a significant role in the overall political suspicion and confrontation between the two countries.

U.S. Support for Iraq during the War

The aim of dissuading Iran from taking a regional lead was a central feature of American policy during the Iran–Iraq War (1980–1988). Washington became more and more interested in Iraq as a counterweight to the Iranian government but still had its dealings with the regime of Saddam Hussein complicated. American support included sharing of intelligence, diplomatic measures, economic measures and access to some dual-use technologies. Information gathered by intelligence, such as satellite evaluations, aided understanding of the situation on the battlefield. The United States also took diplomatic steps to

stop Iran from winning and to ensure the larger strategic interests of the United States in the Persian Gulf. This meant that U.S. involvement did not mark unconditional political backing for Iraq but was rather a pragmatic approach to one goal – restraining Iranian influence. This policy illustrated the complicated situation of the American intervention in the Iran–Iraq war.

The Tanker War and Its Global Implications

The Tanker War was a major maritime dimension of the Iran–Iraq conflict during the 1980s. Iran and Iraq attacked oil tankers and commercial vessels associated with their respective opponents in an effort to disrupt oil exports and weaken each other's economies. Because the Persian Gulf was an important route for international energy trade, these attacks soon became a wider international concern. The United States increased its naval presence and undertook operations to protect commercial shipping, including the escort of reflagged Kuwaiti tankers. American involvement resulted in direct confrontations with Iranian forces and demonstrated the potential for a regional conflict to develop into an international security crisis. The Tanker War highlighted the strategic importance of maritime security and uninterrupted energy transportation. It also strengthened the American military presence in the Persian Gulf and influenced subsequent U.S. approaches to regional security and freedom of navigation.

Regional Alliances and Proxy Dynamics

Regional alliances and proxy actors have become important elements in the strategic competition involving Iran, Iraq, and the United States. Iran has developed relationships with political organisations and armed groups in Iraq to protect its regional interests and counterbalance American influence. The United States, in contrast, has worked closely with the Iraqi government and regional partners to strengthen security cooperation and limit Iran's strategic expansion. Iraq occupies a particularly difficult position between these competing influences. While seeking to protect its sovereignty and independent decision-making, it must also respond to pressure from both Iranian-linked groups and U.S. strategic interests. The activities of state and non-state actors have contributed to political tensions, intermittent violence, and difficulties in establishing a stable regional security environment.

The Role of Oil and Economic Factors

Oil has been a major economic and strategic factor in relations among Iran, Iraq, and the United States. The substantial petroleum resources of Iran and Iraq have given both countries considerable importance in global energy markets. Control over production, exports, and transportation routes has therefore been closely connected with national security and regional influence. For the United States, maintaining stability in major energy-producing areas and protecting international energy routes have remained important strategic concerns. Iran and Iraq, meanwhile, have relied heavily on petroleum revenues for economic development and state resources. Sanctions, conflicts, changes in oil prices, and restrictions on energy exports have consequently affected their economies and

domestic politics. Economic interests therefore remain closely connected with the broader geopolitical competition in the region.

Humanitarian Consequences of the Conflict

The conflicts involving Iran, Iraq, and external powers have produced serious humanitarian consequences. Large numbers of civilians have experienced death, displacement, destruction of homes and infrastructure, and disruption of essential services. Prolonged instability has affected access to healthcare, education, water, employment, and other basic necessities. The effects have extended beyond immediate physical destruction. Displacement, economic hardship, psychological trauma, and the breakdown of community structures have created long-term challenges for affected populations. Continuing political instability has also made reconstruction and humanitarian assistance more difficult. These consequences demonstrate that regional geopolitical conflicts have significant social and human costs beyond their military and political dimensions.

Post-War Relations Between Iran, Iraq, and America

Relations among Iran, Iraq, and the United States after the major conflicts have remained shaped by strategic rivalry, political interests, and historical mistrust. Iraq has attempted to rebuild its political institutions while managing relationships with both Iran and the United States. Iran has expanded its political, economic, and security connections with various Iraqi actors, whereas the United States has continued to maintain strategic and security interests in Iraq. At the same time, common concerns such as terrorism and regional security have occasionally created limited areas of cooperation. However, sanctions, political disagreements, competing alliances, and proxy conflicts have continued to restrict deeper cooperation. The post-war relationship therefore remains fluid and complex, with Iraq frequently positioned between competing Iranian and American interests. These developments continue to influence regional stability and the wider balance of power in the Middle East.

How the Conflict Shaped Modern Middle Eastern Politics

The conflicts involving Iran, Iraq, and the United States significantly influenced the political and security structure of the modern Middle East. They contributed to changes in regional alliances, power relations, security strategies, and patterns of international involvement. The Iranian Revolution of 1979 fundamentally changed relations between Iran and the United States. The hostage crisis deepened mutual distrust and established a long-term pattern of confrontation. During the Iran–Iraq War, American policy was largely directed toward preventing Iran from gaining excessive regional influence, adding an international dimension to the conflict. Iraq was also significantly weakened by the prolonged war with Iran. The economic and military costs of the conflict contributed to further instability, followed by Iraq's involvement in the Gulf War and the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. The subsequent weakening of the Iraqi state created greater opportunities

for Iran to expand its political and security influence. These developments also encouraged changes in regional alliances. Several Gulf countries strengthened their security partnerships with the United States because of concerns about Iran's regional influence. At the same time, Iran developed relationships with political and armed groups across the region. These competing alignments contributed to proxy conflicts, sectarian tensions, and continuing instability in the Middle East.

Lessons from the Iran–Iraq–United States Triangle

The history of relations among Iran, Iraq, and the United States provides important lessons about international intervention and regional power politics. One major lesson is that alliances based on short-term strategic interests can produce unexpected long-term consequences. Policies designed to contain one regional actor may alter the balance of power in ways that create new challenges. The experience also demonstrates the importance of clearly defined and consistent foreign-policy objectives. Changing policies, competing priorities, and indirect involvement can prolong conflicts and increase regional instability. At the same time, external powers must consider the domestic political conditions and historical grievances of the countries in which they intervene. Another important lesson concerns the consequences of military and political intervention. American involvement through diplomatic initiatives, intelligence cooperation, military operations, and other forms of engagement affected regional power relations beyond the immediate objectives of U.S. policy. Therefore, contemporary policymakers need to assess both the short-term benefits and long-term consequences of strategic decisions. Overall, the Iran–Iraq–United States experience demonstrates that Middle Eastern conflicts cannot be explained solely through military competition. Historical developments, national interests, ideology, economic resources, domestic politics, alliances, and the actions of external powers must all be considered when analysing regional security.

Current Implications and Ongoing Tensions

The strategic relationship among Iran, Iraq, and the United States continues to influence Middle Eastern politics. Iraq remains an important arena where Iranian influence and American security interests intersect. The presence of U.S. forces, concerns about armed groups, and Iran's relationships with Iraqi political and security actors continue to generate political and security tensions.

The killing of Iranian General Qassem Soleimani in 2020 represented a major escalation in U.S.–Iran relations and had significant implications for Iraq, where the event occurred. It intensified regional tensions and increased concerns about the possibility of broader confrontation. Economic pressure on Iran, particularly through U.S. sanctions, also affects regional economic and political relations. Iran's close trade and energy connections with Iraq mean that developments in U.S.–Iran relations can have consequences for Iraq's economy and domestic politics. Iraq consequently faces the difficult task of maintaining national sovereignty while managing relationships with both Iran and the United States.

Continued rivalry among these actors creates challenges for political stability, economic development, and regional security. Greater diplomatic engagement, dialogue, and regional cooperation remain important for reducing tensions and preventing further escalation.

15. Prospects for Future Peace and Stability in the Region

The possibility of achieving lasting peace among Iran, Iraq, and the United States remains uncertain because of competing strategic interests, political differences, and regional rivalries. Nevertheless, sustained diplomatic engagement and dialogue could create opportunities for reducing tensions. Regional mediation, confidence-building measures, and respect for national sovereignty may help address long-standing disagreements. Economic cooperation also offers potential incentives for greater stability. Expanded regional trade, energy cooperation, and mutually beneficial economic relationships could encourage the concerned states to reduce confrontation. However, proxy conflicts, external intervention, political mistrust, and unresolved security concerns continue to present major obstacles. Long-term stability will therefore require consistent diplomacy, regional cooperation, and a willingness to manage differences through peaceful mechanisms.

Conclusion

The relationship between Iran, Iraq and the United States has witnessed numerous wars and political changes, all of which have been a product of territorial conflicts, ideological differences, strategic interests, energy resources and external interventions. The Iran revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, the Gulf War, and the invasion of Iraq by the U.S. in 2003 had a major impact on the regional balance of power. Since 2003, Iraq has emerged as a key battleground for Iranian and American influence, while the rise of political and armed groups complicates the security landscape in the area. The study shows that military confrontation is only one of the aspects of the relationship, so are its economic interests and economic structures, as well as alliances and domestic politics. The study reveals that the relationship cannot be interpreted solely through the prism of military confrontation, because its economic interests and economic structures, as well as alliances and domestic politics are equally important. Increasing the importance of diplomacy, respecting sovereignty, dialogue, economic cooperation and confidence building measures are essential to sustainable peace in the region. Less reliance on military means and increased investments in peaceful means of conflict management can help bring greater stability to the Persian Gulf and Middle East.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who contributed directly or indirectly to the completion of this research paper titled "Understanding the Complex Dynamics of the Iran-Iraq-America Conflict." I am thankful to my institution and colleagues for their valuable academic support, encouragement, and constructive suggestions throughout the study.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

1. Abrahamian, E. (2008). *A History of Modern Iran*. Cambridge University Press.
2. Alikhani, H. (2000). *Politics of Iran: Diplomacy and International Relations*. I.B.Tauris.
3. Bowden, M. (2006). *Guests of the Ayatollah: The Iran Hostage Crisis: The First Battle in America's War with Militant Islam*. Atlantic Monthly Press.
4. Chubin, S., & Tripp, C. (1988). *Iran and Iraq at War*. Westview Press.
5. Hiro, D. (1991). *The Longest War: The Iran-Iraq Military Conflict*. Routledge.
6. Hiro, D. (2001). *The Essential Middle East: A Comprehensive Guide*. Carroll & Graf.
7. Hiro, D. (2003). *Iraq: In the Eye of the Storm*. Nation Books.
8. Keddie, N. R. (2006). *Modern Iran: Roots and Results of Revolution*. Yale University Press.
9. Kinzer, S. (2008). *All the Shah's Men: An American Coup and the Roots of Middle East Terror*. Wiley.
10. Pollack, K. M. (2004). *The Persian Puzzle: The Conflict Between Iran and America*. Random House.
11. Parsi, T. (2007). *Treacherous Alliance: The Secret Dealings of Iran, Israel and the United States*. Yale University Press.
12. Razoux, P. (2015). *The Iran-Iraq War*. Harvard University Press.
13. Sick, G. (1985). *All Fall Down: America's Tragic Encounter with Iran*. Random House.
14. Takeyh, R. (2006). *Hidden Iran: Paradox and Power in the Islamic Republic*. Times Books.
15. Takeyh, R. (2009). *Guardians of the Revolution: Iran and the World in the Age of the Ayatollahs*. Oxford University Press.
16. Tripp, C. (2007). *A History of Iraq*. Cambridge University Press.
17. United States Department of State, Office of the Historian. *The Iran-Iraq War and U.S. Foreign Policy. Foreign Relations of the United States*.